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ABSTRACT

This review of state higher education assessment policies sought to test assumptions and conclusions reached during an initial phase of the study, to explore the dynamics of the process by which assessment becomes a state-level issue or concern, and to better understand the multifaceted relationship between state assessment policy and the improvement of teaching and learning. A questionnaire mailed to all 50 state academic officers in December 1997, with follow-ups throughout 1998, resulted in 38 responses. The 21-item questionnaire covered: policy context, objectives, process, outcomes, evaluation, and future directions. The study found that while all states sought to satisfy a variety of objectives through their assessment policies, it also found significant divergence between stated policy objectives and reported outcomes. Campus executive officers were the most consistently significant players in the assessment policy process. In examining the relationship between policy and improvement in teaching and learning, most academic officers saw improved teaching and learning and assessment policy as highly interdependent, although there was some perception that resistance at the institutional and/or faculty level hindered the effectiveness of state policies. Future case studies will be based on the findings and responses from the questionnaire. Appended is the State Higher Education Assessment Questionnaire. (CH)

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State Higher Education Assessment Policy: Research Findings from Second and Third Years

MICHAEL T. NETTLES

JOHN J.K. COLE

National Center for Postsecondary Improvement
Stanford University
School of Education
520 Galvez Mall, 508 CERAS
Stanford, CA 94305-3084

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Methodology

Findings from the first-year literature review, state assessment policy documents, and a focus group conducted with state higher education academic officers provided the framework for the State Higher Education Assessment Questionnaire, or SHEAQ (see Appendix). The SHEAQ had three primary goals: (1) to test the assumptions and conclusions reached during the first year; (2) to explore the dynamics of the policy process by which assessment becomes a state-level issue or concern; and (3) to understand better the multifaceted relationship between state assessment policy on one hand and the improvement of teaching and learning on the other.

The questionnaire was first mailed to all 50 state academic officers in December 1997. In order to achieve a higher response rate, repeated follow-ups were carried out throughout 1998. Although efforts continue to secure responses from a handful of missing states, the data in this paper reflects the responses of 38 state academic officers.[1] The questionnaire contained twenty-one items, divided into six sections—policy context, policy objectives, policy process, policy outcomes, policy evaluation, and future directions. This section of the paper describes the thinking and reasoning that informed the construction of each section of the questionnaire.

Policy Context

In terms of the context questions, the policy documents that informed the development of the SHEAQ were collected during the summer and fall of 1996. Since one of the goals of the project is to observe and report on the evolution of state-level assessment policies, the context questions were designed to identify changes, if any, in a state's policy since 1996. Documentation related to the policy change was requested.

Another dimension of the policy context addressed in the questionnaire was governance structure. Questions about a state's governance structure were included to allow us to discern what relationships, if any, exist between the nature of state assessment policy and governance structure. The taxonomy of state governance structures used in the questionnaire was drawn from McGuinness et al., who categorize state structures into three broad categories: (1) consolidated governing boards, (2) coordinating boards, and (3) planning agencies.[2]

Policy Objectives

In the area of policy objectives, a very important lesson learned from our research during the first year was that states seek to accomplish a wide range of objectives with their assessment policies and practices. We attempted to capture this variety in our first year by adapting existing public policy typologies to an analysis of state assessment policy documents.[3] The resulting policy typology consisted of four categories, each reflecting the ultimate objective, or goal, of the assessment policy: regulation, reform, quality assurance, and accountability.

Our working definitions for each policy type were as follows: a regulation policy is designed to encourage or ensure compliance with state-mandated regulations; a reform policy is designed to encourage some type of reform (the source of this reform may vary); a quality assurance policy is designed to ensure that quality, as defined and measured by the state, is assured; and an accountability policy is designed to make higher education institutions more accountable to a higher authority, generally the state legislature. In some cases, state policies had elements of two or more of these types, while in other cases, none of the four policy types accurately or completely reflected a state's expressed policy objectives.

Thus, in the second-year questionnaire, we revisited this important issue of policy type using a different approach. Drawing on our review and analysis of the assessment policy documents from the states, we compiled a list of all policy objectives stated in the state documents. There were nine assessment policy objectives in all: (1) increasing accountability to the public, (2) increasing fiscal accountability, (3) improving teaching, (4) improving student learning, (5) promoting planning on campus, (6) improving academic program efficiency, (7) facilitating intrastate comparisons, (8) facilitating interstate comparisons, and (9) reducing academic program duplication.

If a state's policy was designed to meet more than one objective, it was not necessarily clear if all of the multiple objectives were of equal weight, or if certain objectives were, in fact, more significant than others. Therefore, we also asked the state academic officers to evaluate the relative significance of each objective. Finally, given the project's focus on the issues of improvement of teaching and learning, we provided the academic officers with an open-ended format for discussing the relationship between these issues and state assessment policy.

Policy Process

The policy process section of the questionnaire represented the first attempt to apply a public policy process framework to a discussion of higher education assessment policies at the state level. The process framework was adapted from Anderson et al., who describe the policy process as "the various activities by which public policy is formed."[4] Anderson and his colleagues articulate a six-stage conceptual framework as a means of analyzing the policy process in general, while acknowledging the differences in processes against content areas. "Welfare policy, natural resource regulation, economic stability policy, and civil rights policy are distinguished by different processes....This does not mean that the environment of each policy area is unique in such a way that precludes generalizations about public policy."[5]

While education policy in general, and higher education policy in particular, are also distinguished by different processes as a policy domain, and these processes in turn differ by state, the stages described by Anderson and his colleagues are useful tools in researching state-level assessment policy. The stages are detailed here.

1. *problem formation*: "relief is sought from a situation that produced a human need, a deprivation, or dissatisfaction." (For the purposes of our study, the first two stages in the Anderson model—problem formation and policy agenda—were combined into one stage representing the period when the need for a state-level assessment policy was first recognized.)

2. *policy formulation*: "pertinent and acceptable proposed courses of action for dealing with public problems are developed."

3. *policy adoption*: "support is developed for a specific proposal such that the policy is legitimized or authorized."

4. *policy implementation*: "the application of the policy to the problem."

5. *policy evaluation*: "an attempt is made to determine whether or not the policy has been effective."

In adapting this framework to the analysis of state-level assessment policies, we were also interested in identifying the most significant entities at each of these five stages. So we added another dimension to this framework: a list of twelve entities or influences, compiled from the literature review and policy analysis in the first year, that play some role in the assessment policy process at the state level. These twelve entities are: (1) state legislatures, (2) governors/executive staffs, (3) executive agencies, (4) system boards, (5) campus executive officers, (6) faculty, (7) external consultants, (8) existing policies and practices on campuses, (9) other states' assessment policies and practices, (10) professional organizations such as SHEEO and AAHE, (11) regional accrediting associations, and (12) disciplinary accrediting associations. Academic officers were asked to evaluate the relative significance of each of these entities at each of the five stages in the policy process model.

Policy Outcomes

Based on the first year's research, we realized that while a state may have certain objectives for its assessment policy, those objectives may not always be met. Alternatively, the policy may have unintended or unexpected outcomes. This distinction between policy objectives and outcomes is a critical one, as we attempt to understand the dynamics of the policy process and make practical recommendations to states on how to achieve the objectives they set for their assessment policies.

The distinction between objectives and outcomes is also addressed in the policy analysis literature. An effort has been made to distinguish between intentional analysis, which focuses on what was, or is, intended by a policy, and functional analysis, which focuses on what actually happened as a result of the policy.[6] For the purposes of this questionnaire and its results, we regard objectives as the key to our intentional analysis, and outcomes as the key to our functional analysis.

Policy Evaluation

This section was designed to determine whether states were successful in improving teaching and learning through the use of assessment policies, and if so, what reasons the academic officers offered for that success. Conversely, if states were unsuccessful, we wanted to understand the reasons for failure. This section also included an item asking academic officers to comment on the possible reasons for a divergence between policy objectives and outcomes, provided such a divergence existed.

Given that the primary emphasis of our research is the use of assessment to improve teaching and learning, this section of the questionnaire also asked a series of open-ended questions designed to give state academic officers an opportunity to reflect and comment upon the relationship between their states' assessment policies and the improvement of teaching and learning.

Future Directions

This section, which asked academic officers to list any institutions in their state that were doing interesting or innovative assessment work, was designed primarily to assist Project 5.2 and 5.3 in determining possible candidates for their institutional case studies.

Results

According to the state academic officers, the most common objective of state-level assessment policies was increasing public accountability (see Table 1). A very close second was improving learning. Improving teaching was the third most common assessment policy objective. The least common policy objectives were facilitating intrastate comparisons and reducing academic program duplication.

Table 1. State Assessment Policy Objectives

Policy Objective	Number of States (n=38)
increasing public accountability	33
improving learning	30
improving teaching	28
promoting planning on campus	24
improving academic program efficiency	18
increasing fiscal accountability	15
facilitating interstate comparisons	8
facilitating intrastate comparisons	7
reducing academic program duplication	7
other	4

The relative significance of these policy objectives matched closely with the reported frequencies. Increasing public accountability had the highest average significance score, followed in order by improving student learning, improving teaching, and promoting planning on campuses. Interestingly, the range of significance scores was small; the highest average significance score was roughly 3.7 (on a scale of one to four), and the lowest average score was 2.5, which suggests that there are no particular policy objectives that enjoy substantially more weight than others.

The most common outcome of states' assessment policies was, not surprisingly, increasing public accountability (see Table 2). More unexpected, however, was that promoting planning on campus ranked second, followed by improving teaching, improving student learning, and improving academic program efficiency.

Table 2. State Assessment Policy Outcomes

Policy Outcome	Number of states (n=38)
increasing public accountability	31
promoting planning on campus	27
improving teaching	22
improving learning	20
improving academic program efficiency	15
reducing academic program efficiency	10
facilitating interstate comparisons	6
facilitating intrastate comparisons	6

During the problem formation stage of the policy process, state academic officers ranked the system boards as the most significant, followed very closely by state legislatures and campus executive officers (see Table 3). Least significant at this stage are disciplinary accrediting associations and external consultants.

Table 3. Significance of Entities in Problem Formation Stage

Entity	Significance (1-4 point scale)
system boards	2.8
state legislature	2.7
campus executive officers	2.5
governor/executive staff	2.4
faculty	2.3
executive agencies	2.3
existing campus practices	2.2
regional accrediting association	2.2
professional organizations	1.8
other states' policies	1.8
external consultants	1.6
disciplinary accrediting associations	1.5

State academic officers regard campus executive officers as most significant during the policy formulation stage, when a variety of policy options are put forth and debated at the state level (see Table 4). Nearly as significant were system boards. The state legislature and faculty were tied at this stage for third.

Table 4. Significance of Entities in Policy Formulation

Entity	Significance
campus executive officers	3.2
system boards	3.1
state legislature	2.5
faculty	2.5
existing campus practices	2.4
executive agencies	2.3
other states' policies	2.2
governor/executive staff	2.0
regional accrediting associations	2.0
professional organizations	1.7
external consultants	1.7
disciplinary accrediting associations	1.5

Campus executive officers are also ranked as the most significant players during the policy adoption stage, according to the state academic officers (see Table 5). Following campus chiefs in terms of significance at this stage are system boards, faculty, state legislatures, and existing campus practices. There is a fairly sharp drop-off, however, between the system boards and the faculty.

Table 5. Significance of Entities in Policy Adoption

Entity	Significance
campus executive officers	3.4
system boards	3.3
faculty	2.5
state legislature	2.4
existing campus practices	2.1
governor/executive staff	2.0
regional accrediting associations	2.0
executive agencies	2.0
other states' policies	1.8
professional organizations	1.6
external consultants	1.4
disciplinary accrediting associations	1.4

During the policy implementation stage, when the "rubber hits the road" and an assessment policy is put into effect, campus executive officers are again the most significant (see Table 6). Faculty, as one might expect (and hope), are ranked second, followed by

system boards. The substantial gap between campus executive officers and faculty is worth noting here.

Table 6. Significance of Entities in Policy Implementation

Entity	Significance
campus executive officers	3.8
faculty	3.2
system boards	2.8
existing campus practices	2.5
executive agencies	2.2
regional accrediting associations	2.1
state legislature	1.7
other states' policies	1.6
governor/executive staff	1.6
professional organizations	1.5
disciplinary accrediting associations	1.5
external consultants	1.3

Finally, when the time comes to determine exactly what the assessment policy is doing and how well it is doing it, state academic officers ascribe the most significance to campus executive officers once more, followed by system boards and faculty (see Table 7). The remainder of the entities all received an average significance score of 2.0 or below.

Table 7. Significance of Entities in Policy Evaluation Interpretation

Entity	Significance
campus executive officers	3.2
system boards	3.0
faculty	2.6
state legislature	2.0
executive agencies	2.0
regional accrediting associations	1.9
existing campus practices	1.6
governor/executive staff	1.6
external consultants	1.5
disciplinary accrediting associations	1.5
other states' practices	1.4
professional organizations	1.3

Interpretation

Based on the data presented above, it is clear that state academic officers perceive that their states' assessment policies seek to meet a variety of objectives. There were no states that reported a single assessment policy objective; all states reported at least two. Given the increasing demands on higher education to be responsive to a wide range of public and political constituencies, it is not surprising that the most frequent and most significant policy objective across the states is increasing public accountability.

Less than half of the academic officers, however, considered increasing fiscal accountability to be an objective, which demonstrates the multifaceted nature of accountability. Because accountability has played, and continues to play, such a prominent role in the assessment movement, understanding the components of accountability is a critical next step for the case study research.

Given that all states have multiple objectives for their assessment policies, understanding the nature of the interaction between these objectives is also essential. It is likely that some of these objectives complement or facilitate each other; for example, promoting planning on campuses might very well lead to improving academic program efficiency, which could result in reducing academic program duplication. On the other hand, some of the objectives might work at cross-purposes to one another. If one of the policy objectives is facilitating intrastate or interstate comparisons, there exists the possibility that such comparisons will obscure the differences across academic programs, student populations, and institutional types, which could result in the assessment policy having a negative effect on teaching and learning. Studying the interactions between policy objectives will be another goal of the case studies.

We also discovered divergence between stated policy objectives and reported policy outcomes. For example, while thirty state academic officers claimed that improving learning was a policy objective, it is an outcome in only twenty states. On the other hand, twenty-four states indicated that promoting planning on campus was an objective, while twenty-seven assert it is an outcome. Clearly, there is a rich vein of research to be mined here—particularly as we attempt to understand how states can craft assessment policies that maximize the improvement of teaching and learning.

The application of a policy process framework to the study of state-level assessment policy in Project 5.1 is a unique and original contribution to the scholarly literature in this field. This approach allows the policy process to be broken down into more focused and well-defined components, which in turn allows for a much more fine-grained picture of exactly how assessment becomes an issue at the state level. The analytical power of this process framework was supplemented by our efforts to specify the relative significance of key entities at each stage in the process.

In broad terms, state academic officers report that campus executive officers are the most consistently significant players in the assessment policy process. In four of five stages, they ranked first in average significance. The relative significance of system boards also appears to be fairly consistent across all five stages.

The rise and fall of other entities at different stages also suggests important patterns of influence. Faculty, for example, do not have as high a profile as one might expect during the policy formulation and adoption stages, but do emerge as key players when it comes to policy implementation. This might reflect the fact that faculty do not have as much input during the early stages of the process as they should, which could have implications for faculty support of state-mandated assessment activities. This also highlights the need for campus executive officers and system boards to serve, as they do with regard to many other issues, as liaisons or mediators between the state, its interests, and its policy on the one hand, and the faculty, their interests, and their actions on the other. These average significance scores represent an exciting first step toward "unpacking" this question of relative influence of various entities in the policy process; more detailed exploration will come in the case studies.

The responses to the open-ended questions afforded a less systematic, but still no less revealing, perspective on state-level assessment, especially the role of assessment in the improvement of teaching and learning. In terms of the relationship between state policy and improvement, many state academic officers regarded the link as implicit. Often, the improvement of teaching was the result of the assessment policies designed to achieve other, more explicit, goals. But does the implicit nature of this relationship mean that it does not receive the attention it deserves from policymakers?

Other academic officers pointed out that feedback from assessment can lead to an improvement in teaching, since it gives faculty and institutions a chance to find out which teaching strategies are successful and which are not. The effect of this feedback is enhanced by networking, whether formal or informal, among faculty who meet at state conferences. Other factors described by a few academic officers as enhancing the improvement of teaching include ties to regional accrediting associations and institutional autonomy from excessive state regulation and standardization.

Most academic officers saw improved teaching and learning as highly interdependent, certainly as policy objectives. A lack of money, however, jeopardizes both goals. Low faculty salaries in some less-affluent states, decreasing state appropriations for public higher education generally, and the dearth of funding for assessment activities in particular were symptomatic of the financial predicament.

Another broad theme that emerged across the responses was the perception of state academic officers that resistance at the institutional and/or faculty levels hindered the effectiveness of states' assessment policies. Faculty who are unwilling to consider how

students learn in new and perhaps unconventional ways was cited as an obstacle, as was the "limited sophistication of personnel," primarily at smaller institutions. Of course, this is a rather provocative indictment of the faculty that merits further consideration and a chance for the faculty to respond to the criticism.

It is also widely held by academic officers, as well as by many scholars in the assessment field, that many assessment policies are problematic because of the difficulties associated with developing, much less perfecting, meaningful and valid measures of teaching and learning. The absence of a common understanding of adequate measures—across disciplines and across institutions—remains a barrier to the improvement of teaching and learning.

Conclusion

Just as our research from the first year informed the construction of our questionnaire in the second year, our analysis of the responses from the questionnaire will inform the development of our case studies. Having touched on some of the key issues regarding state-level assessment policies and the relationship between these policies and the improvement of teaching and learning with the questionnaire, we will be able to explore these issues in much greater depth when we visit states and conduct our case study research. We will also draw substantially upon the literature review that makes up the first part of this report, in order to understand the role of the state in the governance of higher education, the relationship between state regulation and institutional autonomy, and the effects of differing governance structures on higher education policy. All of this contributes to our ultimate goal: the development of practical assessment policy models for states to consider as they try to craft effective higher education assessment policy and legislation.

Endnotes

1. Six states indicated they had no information to report, because there was no state-level assessment policy in place. So while a total of 44 states responded to the questionnaire, the data and analysis here is based on 38 responses.

2. McGuinness, Aims, Rhonda Martin Epper, and Sheila Arredondo. (1994). *State Postsecondary Education Structures Handbook*. Denver: Education Commission of the States.

3. Lowi, Theodore. (1972). "Four Systems of Policy, Politics, and Choice." *Public Administration Review* 32: 298-310.

4. Anderson, James, David Brady, Charles Bullock III, and Joseph Stewart. (1984). *Public Policy and Politics in America*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

5. Ibid.

6. Dubnick, Melvin, and Barbara Bardes. (1983). *Thinking About Public Policy: A Problem-Solving Approach*. New York: Wiley.

Appendix: State Higher Education Assessment Questionnaire (SHEAQ)

State Higher Education Assessment Questionnaire (SHEAQ)

National Center for Postsecondary Improvement

University of Michigan * Room 2339 School of Education * Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259
John J.K. Cole Michael T. Nettles Sally Sharp
313-647-1654 (phone)
313-936-2741 (Fax)

This survey consists of twenty-one questions about the practice and impact of state assessment policies. While the primary emphasis of our work is the impact of student outcomes assessment on the improvement of teaching and learning, we want to place this impact in a broader, comparative context. The survey is divided into six sections: (1) context, (2) objectives, (3) processes, (4) outcomes, (5) evaluation, and (6) future directions. There are both open- and close-ended questions, with space provided for answers after each open-ended question. If you find that the space provided for your answer is not sufficient, please feel free to write on the back of the page, indicating the number of the question you are answering. If you have questions about this survey, please call Michael Nettles, John Cole or Sally Sharp at the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement at the University of Michigan, at 313-647-1654.

This survey is being administered to the state higher education academic officers in each of the 50 states. Your responses will be combined with those of other states and where possible will be reported as group averages. Because some of your responses may identify actions, programs, and relationships unique to your state, we are unable to assure you of the complete confidentiality of your responses. We are very grateful for your time and your willingness to complete this survey; we hope the answers from all 50 states, when compared and analyzed, will help both institutions and policymakers as they address issues of assessment. We will provide you with a draft of our report to give you an opportunity to react to our analysis.

In this space, please identify the person and his/her title who completed this questionnaire. If more than one person collaborated on this questionnaire, please identify each person and his/her title.

Name: _____ Title: _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Context

1. Have there been any changes in [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy since August 1996?
Yes No
2. Have there been any <u>new</u> policies relating to assessment implemented in your state since August 1996?
Yes No

If your answer is "yes" to either question, please attach documentation describing the changes and/or the new policy, and base your answers to the following questions on the most recent policy or policies.

3. How would you characterize the governance structure for public higher education in [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME]? <u>Please mark one only</u>. (Classification system taken from McGuinness et al., 1994)

_____ consolidated governing board for all institutions
_____ consolidated governing board for all senior institutions and a separate board for junior/ community colleges
_____ regulatory board with program approval authority
_____ advisory board with program review and recommendation authority
_____ planning agency
_____ other:_____

Objectives

4. What is the current objective of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy? (Please mark all that apply.)

_____ increasing accountability to public
_____ increasing fiscal responsibility
_____ improving teaching
_____ improving student learning
_____ promoting planning on campuses
_____ improving academic program efficiency
_____ facilitating intrastate comparisons
_____ facilitating interstate comparisons
_____ reducing academic program duplication
_____ other: _____

5. Given what you have marked as the objective(s) of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy, please rate the significance, as you see it, of each of these objectives on a four-point scale, with "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant." Please circle one number for each item checked in question #4.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
objective				
increasing accountability to the public	1	2	3	4
increasing fiscal accountability	1	2	3	4
improving teaching	1	2	3	4
improving student learning	1	2	3	4
promoting planning on campuses	1	2	3	4
improving academic program efficiency	1	2	3	4
facilitating intrastate comparisons	1	2	3	4
facilitating interstate comparisons	1	2	3	4
reducing academic program duplication	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

6. Since one of our areas of emphasis is the impact of assessment on the improvement of teaching and learning, how would you characterize the relationship between [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy and the improvement of teaching? What, if anything, about your policy demonstrates a commitment to the improvement of teaching?

7. Since one of our areas of emphasis is the impact of assessment on the improvement of teaching and learning, how would you characterize the relationship between [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy and the improvement of learning? What, if anything, about your policy demonstrates a commitment to the improvement of learning?

Processes

In this section, we are seeking to understand the stages of the policymaking process, and what entities play the most important roles during each stage. We are considering five stages in our analysis, so there are five questions, one for each stage. For greater clarity, a definition is provided for each stage as part of the questions. (Stages and definitions adapted from Anderson et al., 1984)

8. On a four-point scale, with a "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant," please rate each of the following entities in terms of their relative significance in the **problem formation** stage of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy. During the problem formation stage, "relief is sought from a situation that produces a human need, a deprivation, or dissatisfaction." Please circle one number for each entity.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
entities				
state legislature	1	2	3	4
governor/executive staff	1	2	3	4
exec. agencies (e.g., state ed. department)	1	2	3	4
system boards of trustees/regents	1	2	3	4
campus executive officers	1	2	3	4
faculty	1	2	3	4
external consultants	1	2	3	4
existing policies and practices on campuses	1	2	3	4
other states' policies and practices	1	2	3	4
professional orgs. (e.g., SHEEO; AAHE)	1	2	3	4
regional accreditation association	1	2	3	4
disciplinary accreditation associations	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

9. On a four-point scale, with a "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant," now please rate each of the following entities in terms of their relative significance in the **policy formulation** stage of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy. During the policy formulation stage, "pertinent and acceptable proposed courses of action for dealing with public problems" are developed. Please circle one number for each entity.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
entities				
state legislature	1	2	3	4
governor/executive staff	1	2	3	4
exec. agencies (e.g., state ed. department)	1	2	3	4
system boards of trustees/regents	1	2	3	4
campus executive officers	1	2	3	4
faculty	1	2	3	4
external consultants	1	2	3	4
existing policies and practices on campuses	1	2	3	4
other states' policies and practices	1	2	3	4
professional orgs. (e.g., SHEEO; AAHE)	1	2	3	4
regional accreditation association	1	2	3	4
disciplinary accreditation associations	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

10. On a four-point scale, with a "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant," please rate each of the following entities in terms of their relative significance in the **policy adoption** stage. During the policy adoption stage, "support is developed for a specific proposal such that the policy is legitimized or authorized." Please circle one number for each entity.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
entities				
state legislature	1	2	3	4
governor/executive staff	1	2	3	4
exec. agencies (e.g., state ed. department)	1	2	3	4
system boards of trustees/regents	1	2	3	4
campus executive officers	1	2	3	4
faculty	1	2	3	4
external consultants	1	2	3	4
existing policies and practices on campuses	1	2	3	4
other states' policies and practices	1	2	3	4
professional orgs. (e.g., SHEEO; AAHE)	1	2	3	4
regional accreditation association	1	2	3	4
disciplinary accreditation associations	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

11. On a four-point scale, with a "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant," please rate each of the following entities in terms of their relative significance in the **policy implementation** stage. During the policy implementation stage, there is the "application of the policy to the problem." Please circle one number for each entity.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
entities				
state legislature	1	2	3	4
governor/executive staff	1	2	3	4
exec. agencies (e.g., state ed. department)	1	2	3	4
system boards of trustees/regents	1	2	3	4
campus executive officers	1	2	3	4
faculty	1	2	3	4
external consultants	1	2	3	4
existing policies and practices on campuses	1	2	3	4
other states' policies and practices	1	2	3	4
professional orgs. (e.g., SHEEO; AAHE)	1	2	3	4
regional accreditation association	1	2	3	4
disciplinary accreditation associations	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

12. On a four-point scale, with a "1" representing "not significant" and a "4" representing "very significant," please rate each of the following entities in terms of their relative significance in the **policy evaluation** stage. During the policy implementation stage, "an attempt is made to determine whether or not the policy has been effective." Please circle one number for each entity.

	Significance			
	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Very
entities				
state legislature	1	2	3	4
governor/executive staff	1	2	3	4
exec. agencies (e.g., state ed. department)	1	2	3	4
system boards of trustees/regents	1	2	3	4
campus executive officers	1	2	3	4
faculty	1	2	3	4
external consultants	1	2	3	4
existing policies and practices on campuses	1	2	3	4
other states' policies and practices	1	2	3	4
professional orgs. (e.g., SHEEO; AAHE)	1	2	3	4
regional accreditation association	1	2	3	4
disciplinary accreditation associations	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4
other: _____	1	2	3	4

Outcomes

13. There is often a distinction made between the objective(s) of a policy and the outcome(s) of a policy. Questions #4 and 5 explored objectives. In this question, please tell us what you think have been the **outcomes** of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] policy. (Please mark all that apply.)

_____ increasing accountability to public
_____ increasing fiscal responsibility
_____ improving teaching
_____ improving student learning
_____ promoting planning on campuses
_____ improving academic program efficiency
_____ facilitating intrastate comparisons
_____ facilitating interstate comparisons
_____ reducing academic program duplication
_____ other: _____
_____ other: _____

14. Please circle one answer to each of the following questions. Is [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] currently using:

common instruments across institutions for assessment of teaching?	Yes	No
common performance indicators for assessment of teaching?	Yes	No
common performance indicators for assessment of teaching that are linked to funding?	Yes	No
common procedures for collecting assessment data on teaching?	Yes	No
common instruments across institutions for assessment of learning?	Yes	No
common performance indicators for assessment of learning?	Yes	No
common performance indicators for assessment of learning that are linked to funding?	Yes	No
common procedures for collecting assessment data on learning?	Yes	No

15. If any of the items in question #14 is circled, please describe the impetus for the interest in/adoption for each of the measures circled.

Evaluation

16. If there are differences between policy objectives and policy outcomes in [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME], why do you think these differences exist?

17. Provided that the improvement of teaching is an objective of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy, what has enhanced [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective? Please interpret this question broadly; we are trying to understand what persons, events, and/or processes enhance [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective.

17a. What evidence exists of your state's success at meeting the objective of improving teaching?

18. Provided that the improvement of learning is an objective of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy, what has enhanced [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective? Please interpret this question broadly; we are trying to understand what persons, events, and/or processes enhance [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective.

18a. What evidence exists of your state's success at meeting the objective of improving learning?

19. Provided that the improvement of teaching is an objective of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy, what has hindered [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective? Please interpret this question broadly; we are trying to understand what persons, events, and/or processes hinder [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective.

20. Provided that the improvement of learning is an objective of [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] assessment policy, what has hindered [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective? Please interpret this question broadly; we are trying to understand what persons, events, and/or processes hinder [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] success in achieving this objective.

Future Directions

21. As part of our research in Year Three, we are planning to conduct case studies on the most interesting and/or innovative assessment policies and practices. In your opinion, what campuses/institutions in [INDIVIDUAL STATE NAME] are doing the most interesting and/or innovative work related to assessment?

Please return this survey before January 15, 1998 in the envelope provided to:
NCPI * University of Michigan * Room 2239 School of Education * Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259